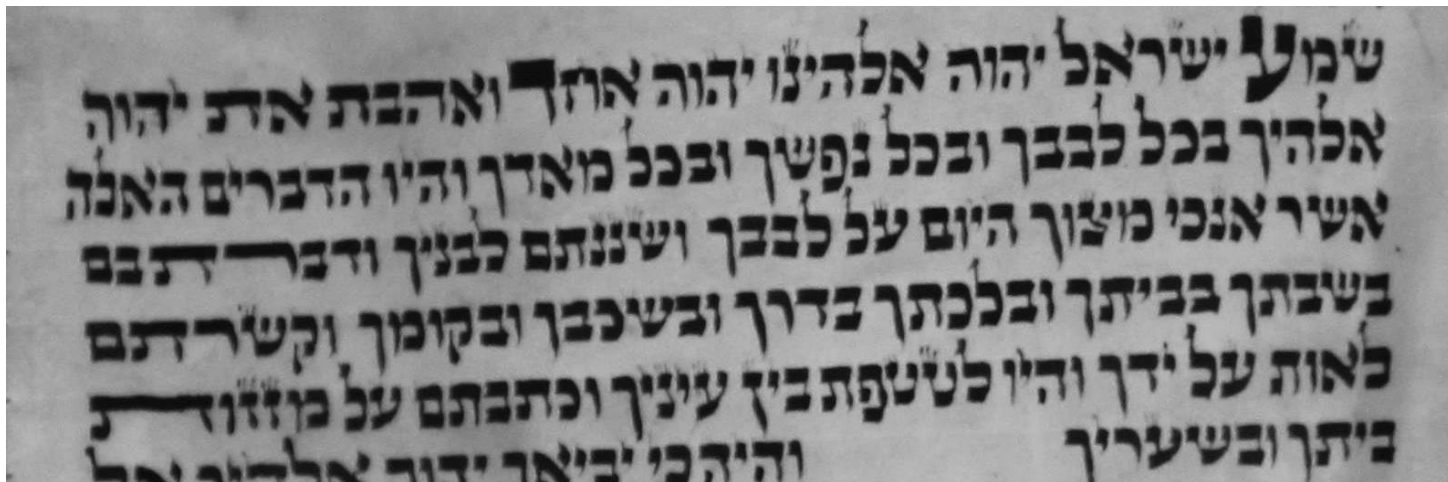


The Shema (שְׁמַע)

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (the Shema).

It is very important to note that the word *shema* is an imperative verb, which means to “hear” and “obey.” *Shema* can be likened to when we have given instruction to children, and we ask, “Did you hear me?” We are not questioning their physical ability to hear; we are asking if they are going to obey.



Notice the 2 enlarged letters on the first line ע & ד

Below the Shema is written with vowels, for ease of pronunciation.

שְׁמַע * יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד * :

* The Hebrew letters ayin ע and dalet ד are super-sized in the Torah Scroll.

Two explanations as to why these letters are enlarged:

- Some say these 2 letters form the word עֵד, which means *witness* (also, *testimony* & *evidence*) (as in Gen 31:48,50,52; Ex 20:16, 22:13, 23:1; Lev 5:1; Dt 5:20,17:6; etc), the Shema is a witness to the sovereignty of God and that our primary duty is to obey and to love God with our whole heart and whole being.
- Another thought since there are no vowel markings on the Scroll, עד could be עד which is *forever, eternity* (Is 57:15, etc.). God's Word stands forever!

Did you know that the Shema is the Confession of our faith?

Yeshua, all His Disciples, the Apostles, as well as Paul and James all recited the Shema (Deut. 6:4-5)! It is the confession of our faith.

²⁸Yeshua was asked a profound question: “What commandment is the foremost of all?” (Mk 12:28)

²⁹Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! YHVH OUR GOD IS ONE YHVH; ³⁰AND YOU SHALL LOVE YHVH YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’ ³¹(Mark 12:29-30; Yeshua quotes Deut 6:4).

“The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ (Yeshua quotes Lev 19:18). There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31a quotes Deut.6:4-5 and Lev 19:18).

Shouldn't we, as believers, understand and confess what Yeshua Himself stated was the most important commandment!” As we recite this creed, we are declaring allegiance to the Father & proclaiming our faith in Him.

If our desire is to ‘do what Jesus did,’ shouldn't also regularly recite the Shema?

As we read the Shema, let us meditate on our Messiah's creed and remember that “Yeshua is the Word (Torah) made flesh”